



SR 520 Tolling FAQ Summer 2011

Q: Why is WSDOT tolling the SR 520 bridge?

A: Tolling the SR 520 bridge helps build a new, more reliable, safer bridge. The target date to open the bridge is 2014.

Q. When does SR 520 tolling start?

A. An exact date for the start of SR 520 tolling is not available at this time due to the complexities of reaching milestones within the program. At this time, we do know that all-electronic tolling will start sometime this summer. We hope to announce the tolling start date several weeks in advance, and it will be heavily publicized in the media and on the *Good To Go!* website.

Q. Will there be toll booths?

A. No. Tolling on the SR 520 bridge will be all-electronic, meaning there will be no toll booths. Drivers on SR 520 will be able to cross without stopping to pay, allowing traffic to flow at normal highway speeds.

Q. What is meant by off-peak / variable / time of day tolling?

A. Toll rates on the SR 520 Bridge will vary by time of day. Rates will be lower at off-peak travel times, such as late at night and mid-day, and highest during peak travel times. Off-peak tolling will help improve traffic flow by encouraging some drivers to shift their travel times, thus reducing the number of vehicles using the highway at peak travel times.

Q. How will drivers pay?

A. *Good To Go!* is the name of the electronic tolling system in Washington. With *Good To Go!*, drivers can use one account on any tolled bridge or road in Washington. WSDOT has developed a system to make payment as easy as possible:

1. Drivers with a *Good To Go!* Pass will have tolls automatically deducted from their prepaid account.
2. Drivers without a *Good To Go!* Pass can set up a Pay By Plate account. They register their license plate(s) with *Good To Go!* and when crossing the bridge, a photo is taken of the plate number and tolls are deducted from their account. Pay By Plate accounts will incur a \$.25 fee per toll transaction.

Drivers who do not have any type of account will Pay By Mail. The registered owner of a vehicle without a prepaid account will be billed by mail a higher toll rate of \$1.50 for each toll transaction.

Q. Where will the tolls be collected?

A. Electronic tolling equipment will be installed on overhead gantries at the east high-rise of the SR 520 Bridge structure.



Q. Will tolls be collected in both directions?

A. Tolls will be collected in both directions. The toll rates will vary depending on the time of day, and the current toll rate will be displayed on an electronic sign on the high-rise. Toll signage will be posted on both sides of the bridge to alert drivers to the last exit before tolling begins.

Q. Will tolling end when the project is paid off?

A. The legislation authorizing tolling on the SR 520 Bridge does not specify an end date. It is expected that tolls will continue on the bridge at least until the 30 and 40 year bonds are paid off. Revenue from tolling the bridge will only be used as authorized by the Legislature for bond payments, operations and maintenance within the SR 520 corridor.

Q. Are tolls on SR 520 unfair to those with lower incomes?

A. We are sensitive to the economic circumstances of all users of tolled roads. For the SR 520 Bridge, WSDOT looked at how tolling would affect drivers with limited incomes and learned that it was critical for people to have multiple choices for traveling across the bridge. Since October 2010, King County Metro and Sound Transit have added nearly 130 new bus trips to the existing 600 trips occurring daily on the SR 520 Bridge. Low income customers may also use Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) cards to establish and replenish a *Good To Go!* account.

Q. If I establish a Good To Go! account will my privacy be protected?

A. Yes. *Good To Go!* electronic tolling Passes use radio frequency identity chips, which do not hold any personal information. For Pay By Mail, only photos of the license plate are taken, not the driver or occupants. All personal data, including name, address and payment information, is kept confidential and privacy is protected by law. Under no circumstances is individual customer information disclosed for use by marketing firms.

Q. Can I use an existing Tacoma Narrows Bridge *Good To Go!* account on the SR 520 Bridge?

A. Yes, an existing *Good To Go!* account and Pass can be used on any tolled highway or bridge (current or future) in Washington. Likewise, new *Good To Go!* Passes will also work on any tolled facility in Washington.

Q. Will my account ever expire?

A. After 24 consecutive months without toll activity, the *Good To Go!* account is charged a \$5 inactivity fee and then closed. Any remaining funds are returned to the account holder (unregistered accounts cannot be refunded). You may request to close your account at any time, without being charged a fee.

Q. Will the I-90 bridge be tolled?

A. Not at this time. The state Legislature considered options for tolling both the SR 520 and I-90 bridges as part of its Tolling Implementation Committee study in 2008. The Legislature only authorized tolling of the SR 520 Bridge, with the intent to monitor how SR 520 tolling affects traffic on other corridors, and if sufficient funds are being collected to pay for costs associated with building the 520 replacement bridge. Legislative authorization is required to toll any new corridors, including I-90, and tolling I-90 would also have to be coordinated with FHWA.